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C O N F I D E N T I A L BASRAH 000154

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DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP, DS/IP/ITA

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SUBJECT: REO BASRAH EMERGENCY ACTION COMMITTEE MEETING ON 09/22/2006

CLASSIFIED BY: Bryan T. Bachmann, RSO, REO Basrah, Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (g)

1. (C) The Regional Coordinator (RC) chaired a meeting of the Emergency Action Committee (EAC) on September 22, 2006, to discuss the latest indirect fire (IDF) attacks against the Regional Embassy Office (REO) and the general security situation. The EAC was prompted by a rocket attack on the REO that killed a Department of State contractor while he was in his residential trailer. Attending the meeting were the Regional Security Officer, Management Officer, Political Officers, and representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Triple Canopy, Strategic Counter-Intelligence Directorate, Kellogg Brown and Root and the Office of Regional Affairs.

2. (C) Indirect fire (IDF) attacks on Basrah Palace have occurred on an almost daily basis during the past three weeks. But only recently have the attacks become more accurate and more dangerous. Many of the rockets used in previous attacks were duds that did not explode, and they did not land near facilities on the U.S compound. Recently, however, rocket attacks have impacted near housing and offices in the REO. Rockets in the two attacks on September 22 landed directly on one housing trailer and near the gym.

3. (C) There is no overhead cover for REO personnel in many of the offices and in all of the residential trailers. Because of this vulnerability, the EAC agreed that it would be prudent to reduce the overall number of personnel on the REO by 20-30 percent through a temporary redeployment of personnel in country and extensions of leave for those out of country. REO Basrah will work closely with Embassy Baghdad in coordinating these efforts.

4. (C) In addition to temporarily relocating personnel, the REO is again carefully looking at all measures it can take to improve the safety of its employees. By separate communication, the REO will send Embassy Baghdad a list of small projects that, if funded, would enhance the security of its personnel. These include more protective t-walls, blast-proof doors for the main REO building and blast curtains for windows. The REO is scheduled to receive additional bunkers, and an overhead cover project is scheduled to begin construction during the last week of October. Both of these projects will improve security from IDF substantially, and the REO requests that these projects move ahead as expeditiously as possible.

5. (U) REO Basrah is working in close coordination with Embassy Baghdad's EAC to reduce the REO's footprint and improve the security situation in Basrah.

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